

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF DANCE

Visitors' Report

California State University, Fullerton

800 N. State College Boulevard

Fullerton, CA 92834

Bruce Goodrich, Chair, Department of Theatre and Dance

March 16-18, 2014

Martha Curtis, Virginia Commonwealth University

Mary Linda Graham, Hope College

Programs or degrees for which renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought.

Bachelor of Arts – 4 years; Dance

DISCLAIMER

The following report and any statements therein regarding compliance with NASD accreditation Standards represent only the considered opinion of the visitors at the time of the visit. Definitive evaluation of compliance and the accreditation decision will be made by the appropriate Commission following a complete review of the application, including the Self-Study, the Visitors' Report, and any Optional Response to the Visitors' Report submitted by the institution.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The visiting team would like to thank the Debra Noble and the dance faculty and students and the staff of the Department of Theatre and Dance for the warm welcome and for the vibrant discussions throughout the visit. In addition, the team would like to thank Bruce Goodrich, Chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance; Joseph Arnold, Dean of the College of the Arts; and José L. Cruz, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for their hospitality and open dialog during the visit.

USE OF STANDARDS

Visitors must base their evaluations on NASD Standards, as published in the latest edition of the *Handbook* and any current addenda, associated with each section in the outline that follows. The annotations below provide a guide; however, they are not a substitute for the Standards themselves.

A. Purposes

The Mission of the Department of Theatre and Dance, and the Mission of the BA in Dance are included in the Self Study Pages 3-15 with specific descriptions of how the program fulfills each aspect of its mission, and goals. It is clear that there is a strong and thorough commitment to making the mission an ongoing guiding force as the department moves forward. The elements of the mission were observed and confirmed during the NASD visit. There are statements regarding the Mission of the dance unit in the Self Study on pages 3 and on page 11, as well as on the website:

<http://www.fullerton.edu/Arts/theatredance/programs/dance.html> and
http://www.fullerton.edu/Arts/documents/CSUF_DanceNews2013.pdf

Each statement is worded differently; however they are consistent in articulating a purpose of *developing dance artists and to foster understanding and discipline to prepare them for success* (Self Study page 11).

The visiting team noted that the Mission Statement in the Self-Study did not reflect some of the program's strengths. For example, the visiting team observed a rigorous yet supportive teaching and learning environment as well as a strong sense of community and mentorship in the program. This element of the dance unit is an exemplar of the university's commitment to actively engaging *students, faculty and staff ...in close collaboration to expand knowledge* (see Self Study page 2). Another powerful element that was observed but not quite pulled into the dance unit's mission statement is the overall commitment to developing each student's individual creative voice. Elements of diversity and cohesion were also observed as distinct strengths.

Overall the statements in the Self Study are accurate; however it might be advantageous to review all these statements for consistency, with the idea of articulating some of the distinct aspects of the overall teaching and learning environment mentioned above.

A meeting with students during the visit revealed a high level of satisfaction with the dance program. However, students articulated a yearning for more opportunities to perform. The Mission Statement in the Self Study (page 11) states that at the *heart of the Department's academic programs is a comprehensive and wide ranging series of public performances*. The public performances in dance include the two formal dance concerts each year, along with informal choreography showings, and a new touring ensemble. This is consistent with the objectives of a BA in Dance. However the words *comprehensive and wide ranging* may not specifically describe the production and performance experience for dance majors. It appears the dance unit offers a strong and distinct program in which dance students have opportunities to perform in dance concerts including works by faculty, students and guest artists, while being located in the College of the Arts with its wide range of Theater and Music productions as well as Visual Art exhibitions. As the program moves forward, a look at how to more clearly articulate the production and performance program offered to dance majors would be beneficial.

The institution appears to meet standards relating to Purposes.

B. Size and Scope

At the time of the visit the dance unit had 71 registered majors, with four full-time faculty, and one faculty member shared with the Theatre Department (50/50). In addition, a Senior Faculty member teaches required dance courses on a reduced load through the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP). The department shares administrative as well as production staff with the theatre program, and has a ½ time staff accompanist who plays for half of the technique classes (Self Study pages 16-17, observations during visit).

There are sufficient upper level courses for the degree, and opportunities in performance and production are consistent with NASD standards as well as departmental objectives.

Review of the size and scope of the CSU dance unit reveals that it is at full capacity. All classes during the visit were fully enrolled, and freshman level technique and some general education dance courses appeared to be over enrolled. The construction of a state-of-the-art new Performing Arts Complex has resolved many of the Theater and Dance Department's previous issues with space and performance venues, however, none of the dance studios appear to meet the NASD standard of 2400 square feet (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.F.1.g.). Although most of the dance classes observed appeared to provide 100 square feet per dancer, the freshman technique class for dance majors did not appear to meet this standard and was crowded. It appears that if the dance department is to increase its enrollment it is not clear how the institution would maintain compliance with NASD standards in relation to studio size. This concern was discussed throughout the visit and upper administration appeared to be aware and interested in finding of resources for another large dance studio as part of future planning. In the meantime, it will be important to guard against enrollment increase in dance.

Another size and scope issue appears to be the future succession of faculty. A senior faculty member will be moving into the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) next year, and the faculty member currently in FERP is reaching the end of the 5-year program. Additional full-time faculty resources will be needed to meet the department's stated objectives and to cover core curriculum (See Visitors' Report page 6). During the visit, discussions with the Provost and the Dean revealed a strong commitment to the dance unit and a plan to conduct a search for a new dance faculty member in the next academic year.

The ½ time dance musician is only able to play for ½ of the dance major technique classes which happen simultaneously. The Self-Study states that a second ½ time musician is desired so that all dance major technique classes are conducted with live music. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.E.9.a. and b.). The upper administration appeared to be in support of this proposal at the time of the visit.

The institution appears to meet standards relating to Size and Scope.

C. Finances

In the Self Study Appendix I and II the Department of Theatre and Dance budgets are combined, and the Self Study (page 18) states *the comingling of the department finances make accurate allocation (to the dance unit) impossible to determine*. However, it appears the dance unit has adequate resources to implement its degree program, and to support its purposes and goals. Income from dance productions ticket sales is impressive (over \$40,000 each year, Self Study page 17), and serves to enable the department to stay vibrant in spite of recent state budget cuts. As with most state universities, budget cuts have increased the demand for more fundraising efforts. The addition of a College of the Arts Development Officer has significantly contributed to the effectiveness in the area of fundraising, though the department is challenged with the ongoing need for funds to offset state cutbacks.

Currently fundraising efforts appear to be successful and beneficial, especially in the area of scholarships. In addition, fundraising has expanded resources for guest artists, faculty travel, and classroom needs (Self Study page 19). Each year a dance professor who is the future dance coordinator makes an annual request to the CSU Student Association and receives funding for AC DFA, guest artists, and student touring group.

During the visit, faculty and dance coordinator expressed appreciation for budgetary support for the dance unit from the Department of Theatre and Dance and stated that requests resulted in needed allocations. The current chair of Theatre and Dance, and previous chairs of the department have been supportive of dance. However, the lack of a breakdown of the budget for the dance unit raised some concern about the future of the dance unit, should there be a change in administrative personnel. During the visit, discussions ensued about possible ways to make budget recording more transparent. Also, procedures for requests and allocations might be formalized to lay the groundwork for ongoing fairness.

According to the Self Study, page 18, *allocation and control of expenditures are done by the production manager in conjunction with the Executive Committee and the Chair but all are subject of full faculty approval*. Because the number of dance faculty is considerably smaller than the theatre unit faculty, this process could put dance at a disadvantage unless there is representation from the dance unit on the Executive Committee.

The Self-Study states (page 18) *that allocations for personnel are sufficient, once the new faculty line is filled and the need for a second dance accompanist is a vital factor in the program development*. The visiting team's observations and discussions during the visit confirmed this statement.

The institution appears to meet standards relating to Finances.

D. Governance and Administration

1. Overall Effectiveness

The dance unit is part of the Department of Theatre and Dance which is a large, vibrant, and complex department with an active and visible production season. A Dance Coordinator serves as a leader for the dance unit and each faculty member has areas of responsibility which are outlined on page 20 of the Self-Study. The overall culture within the dance unit is one of open communication and mutual respect. There appears to be an effective line of communication between the Dance Coordinator and the Theatre and Dance Chair, who also meets with the Dance Faculty once each semester. At the time of the visit, the Dance Coordinator Position was in the process of transition as the current Coordinator is moving into the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP). The future Dance Coordinator was in charge of the NASD review process, and throughout the visit it was clear the transition of leadership is being handled with effective communication, mutual respect and a sense of unified direction.

The Department of Theatre and Dance are within of the College of the Arts. It appears the leadership of the College of the Arts is in transition due to the pending retirement of the current Dean. The university has a new President and Provost, and conversations during the visit revealed that there is excitement about the new leadership. Meetings with the Dean and Provost reflected a high level of respect for the dance unit and the Department of Theatre and Dance, with open attention to strengths and concerns. The Department of Theatre and Dance Annual Report 12-13 (Appendix A) states that both the Provost and President have shown *enthusiastic support for the endeavors of the Department of Theatre and Dance*.

Conversations with faculty and a meeting with the Provost revealed that major structural changes are being made in the upper administration *to optimize its ability to advance our University's mission and achieve our strategic goals and objectives*. (See Article <http://news.fullerton.edu/2014sp/Academic-Affairs-One-Year-Later.asp>) It appears that these changes have the potential of strengthening the institution as a whole as it moves into the future.

Overall, the governance of the dance unit within the department, college and university appears to be conducted effectively. Although there are concerns about the dance unit being outnumbered in size within the Department of Theatre and Dance (Self Study page 20, conversations during the visit) it appears the culture of the this excellent department is remarkably harmonious. As stated previously, one consideration, that might assure stronger representation of dance as a distinct discipline would be the inclusion of the Dance Coordinator on the Department's Executive Committee, especially considering the overall amount of change within the institution.

2. Policy-Making

The structure of meetings for the department and dance unit are outlined on page 15 of the Self Study. The Department of Theatre and Dance conducts two faculty retreats (full day) each year, and areas within the department meet on a regular basis. Dance faculty meet monthly. The dance unit appears to also have a culture of day-to-day communication and evaluation. Evidently proposed ideas, curriculum changes and proposals for resources are discussed in smaller meetings and then brought to the Theatre and Dance faculty as a whole, or to the Chair (Self Study page 15, conversations during the visit). The productions are effectively organized through regular production meetings including all appropriate constituents. The dance unit has developed a Student Handbook which clearly articulates departmental policies.

3. Dance Executive's Load and Responsibilities

The designated executive of the dance unit is the Chair of Theatre and Dance, which is a 12 month position. The Dance Coordinator is a 9-month position, and receives teaching unit release time to compensate for administrative duties.

4. Communication

Communication throughout the dance unit and the department appears to be open and effective, and supported by the structures described above. The student meeting revealed that the students experience a high level of attention from the faculty who are responsive to their needs and concerns.

The institution appears to meet the standards relating to Governance.

E. Faculty and Staff

The quality of the full-time, part-time and guest faculty is a major strength of the dance unit. The full-time faculty are committed artist- teachers with diverse areas of expertise. Good communication, a positive focus on mission, combined with mutual respect and support, result in cohesion and good morale. The quality of teaching and performance observed by the evaluators was high, and it was evident that the faculty worked closely and effectively with the students in the studio, in the classroom, and in rehearsals and production. Resident faculty are augmented by visiting faculty with specializations in a variety of fields who teach master classes, perform informally and set repertory. The faculty and staff are fully qualified for their responsibilities. (Self-Study, page 22 and Appendix III)

Currently four full-time dance faculty serve the dance unit, with one additional full-time dance faculty member serving dance and theater (50/50). Full-time faculty are committed to teaching dance and theater majors. There is no minor program. Part-time and casual hires serve a large non-major dance enrollment. Interestingly, most of the part-time faculty are alums of the CSUF Theater and Dance program.

The full-time faculty work hard to cultivate the individual artistic voice of the students; the rigorous General Education requirements prepare students academically.

Faculty expressed commonalities embraced in teaching philosophy includes:

- classical characteristics in training content
- “hands-on” approach to mentoring, developing one-on-one relationships, instill agency in students, encouraging them to own their education
- mutual respect between faculty model the value of creative individuality– the students emerge from the curriculum with their individual voice
- team/ensemble care – faculty are professionals – students don’t fall through the cracks nor do they do enable students negatively
- faculty are mutually aware of what others are doing – they horizontally connect to enhance and integrate
- faculty work with the students and colleagues when students are assessed.

The full-time faculty is in transition due to transitions of senior faculty. One senior faculty member is entering his final year within the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) beginning fall 2014,

entering full retirement upon the conclusion of the spring term 2015. Another senior faculty member is entering the FERP beginning fall 2014. When a senior faculty member enters FERP, his/her load shifts to a fractional status. FERP faculty can participate in the program for a maximum of five years, receiving 80% of their salary while teaching a reduced load. While FERP is an extraordinary opportunity for senior faculty, there is a shift of burden to junior faculty without commensurate salary recognition or additional faculty support. The unit is confident, and the upper administration (Provost/Dean) affirms, a commitment to a new full-time line upon the full retirement of the senior faculty member concluding the FERP spring 2015. This means that for 2014-2015 there will be two senior faculty in FERP, teaching reduced loads, while the unit is unable to hire. Morale seems positive, and faculty are confident the situation will be managed for the year.

Discussions occurred during the visit about areas of the curriculum needing additional faculty resources after the coming faculty retirement and movement of the senior faculty to FERP. A new faculty line could provide an opportunity to hire a faculty member who could teach some or all of the following areas: Creative Dance for Children, Technology and Dance (potentially alleviating concerns regarding the saturated production staff), Ballet, Modern, Pedagogy and Coordinate concerts.

Appointment, evaluation and advancement, salaries and benefits for full-time faculty are described on I. E. 2, 3, 4 of the Self-Study and appear comparable to similar institutions. Teaching loads are full, but appear to be within NASD standards. An innovative “variable” credit option for technique classes makes it possible for students to enroll in a 2-credit technique course for 1 credit (while the instructor receives load recognition for 2-credits per student). For each credit of a technique course (activity course) the faculty member receives 1.3 units of teaching credit. This “variable” system allows students to economically participate in more technique courses without over-taxing faculty. (Self-Study p. I. E. 4).

Student/faculty ratio: major classes are full. Non-major classes are heavily enrolled. In some cases classes (both major and non-major) appear to be over enrolled given the studio space limitations. It does not appear possible to consider additional growth and maintain compliance with standards.

Faculty development opportunities appear to be in line with institutional mission and objectives.

Production and Administrative staff are well qualified, supportive and sufficient for current needs. The staff is provided through the dance unit’s location within the Department of Theatre and Dance. However, any additional production efforts outside of two concerts per year, each with two weekends, are limited, as the production and administrative staff are working to maximum. Additional production does not appear viable given current production loads.

Faculty and administration agree that a second qualified musician-for-dance staff member is necessary to provide live music for Modern and Ballet classes. Although the current musician for dance is well qualified and supportive, he cannot be in two places at the same time. (Self-Study pages 17 and 18).

Specifically regarding live music, it is not clear how the institution meets standards regarding sufficient staff. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.E.9.a.).

The Provost and Chair affirm support for a part-time position for a Musician for Dance. Given the urban location of the institution, recruiting a qualified musician appears viable.

The institution appears to meet the standards relating to Faculty and Staff.

F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety

The Performing Arts Center is a \$48-million complex that provides state-of-the-art facilities for audiences and performers alike, as well as instructional facilities for students. Opening in 2006 the PAC is an outstanding facility both functionally and aesthetically. It also provides a central location for dance studios, classrooms, dance offices and primary theater. One studio, which is primarily used by the theater department, and one experimental performing space dubbed “12x16”, are located in an adjacent building and in a downtown location, respectively. Observation of the facilities affirms description as provided in the Self-Study (I. F. pages 27-32). The studios and theaters are used to capacity. Several classes observed during the visit were over-enrolled given current studio size. The largest studio, at 2240 square feet, is below NASD Standard of 2400 square feet. The small studios are a weakness for this vital and growing program.

The institution does not appear to meet NASD Standards in regards to Studio space size. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.F.1.g.)

Lighting, temperature and humidity control, audio equipment, sound control, appear to meet the standard for all facilities observed and sufficient to support curricular and associated activities. No classrooms are currently equipped to be “smart,” however; technological equipment is available for use in all studios and classrooms as per the Self-Study description (page 29).

Computer labs are available for all students to use in the well-appointed library. No dedicated computer lab for the performing arts outside of the CAD (which is exclusive to theater production students) is available. A computer lab for dancers to use would provide the dance majors with better access to creative production and research options.

The location of the dance program within the theater program provides proximity and access to an array of costume, prop, set, and make-up facilities.

Facilities and equipment appear safe and secure. No conditions appeared to merit review by building or safety professionals beyond current practice. Maintenance, repair and replacement of technology and equipment are managed through the Theater Department. Budget constraints as mandated by the state require a prioritized apportioning for equipment and facility repair and maintenance. This is a constant concern for the program, but appears to be managed.

I.F.3, pages 29-30, of the Self-Study provides the description of the practice for dispensing information regarding security concerns, rules and regulations. Students receive information and have access to the Health Clinic and Physical therapists.

All majors participate in Anatomical Kinesiology course by their junior year. Course content includes issues of personal health, musculoskeletal health and injury prevention. A freshman production class (470B) includes 60hrs of theater crew work. The seminar portion of this course meets 3hrs – one time per week. This freshman seminar appears to have some leeway in content for the dance majors. This course provides students with an overview of production elements, including information on safe handling of production equipment. There appears to be an opportunity to provide dance students with basic health and injury prevention information at an earlier time in their education as part of this course. Consideration might be given to providing health information through this course opportunity, thereby introducing students upon entry to the dance program to basic information about health, safety and injury prevention within the contexts of studio practice, rehearsal and performance. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.F.1.c.).

The Self-study does not include specific documentation addressing NASD Standards regarding health and safety and injury prevention in the main body of the report. More information regarding this item is requested for inclusion in the Optional Response.

G. Library and Learning Resources

The library employs a dedicated and knowledgeable Arts Librarian who is committed to maintaining an outstanding collection. The librarian is regularly engaged to present for various dance courses (both major and non-major). The library is located within a block of the Performing Arts Center. High tech labs, including labs with sound/video/white boards, are located within the library and are available to all students.

In addition to serving majors, 1500 general education dance students write research papers every semester. These courses are on par with other general education introductory arts courses in research demands. The library collection has grown to support this need.

The dance video collection is substantive and appropriate; students have access to Alexander Street Press and the library is considering trialing Dance on Video (streaming video). Like many libraries in higher education, transferring the VHS collection to a streaming option is being explored. Students always have access to two reference librarians online via Help Chat (no matter where they are-international or national, no matter what time or day). Interlibrary loan requests arrive within two to ten days. The Electronic-books collection is increasing – they are an economic option. Faculty supplement from personal collections when necessary. For example the current Dance History teacher has developed an extensive and impressive collection of original playbills from the early 19th century, focusing on Ballet Russe programs (Diaghilev) and the playbills of modern dance trailblazers and pioneers. This personal collection provides a rare primary source for students.

Student access to and engagement with library resources is required, encouraged and on going. The library collection and resources appear to be qualitative and meet NASD standards.

The institution appears to meet standards relating to Library and Learning Resources.

H. Recruitment, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, and Advisement

1. Recruitment, Admission, Retention

Recruitment, Admission and Retention as described in I.H. of the Self-Study appears to work well for the dance program. Although a B.A. program, the major is selective through audition and classes are full. When the audition process was initiated, there was a drop in enrollment. Current audition, evaluation and placement practices have enhanced overall quality and retention. Given current studio space restrictions, the program (even with slightly reduced numbers) is saturated. Academic admission follows institutional protocol.

The entire CSUF institution is currently experiencing phenomena termed “Impaction.” “Impaction” is a systemic issue for the California State institutions, and consequently has a programmatic impact on dance. The California State educational master plan mandates that a student who so desires should be able to pursue an education through the PhD level, given they meet academic standards. At \$3600 per semester, tuition is economically accessible for many students. The result is that the CSUF institution must turn away a majority of applicants-including those who have passed the dance auditions. The first students to be accepted into any

program are “in-region” first-time freshmen with a 2.7 GPA; second to be accepted are in-region transfer students. Third to be accepted by the institution is “out of region” transfers. “Out-of-region” freshmen are the last to have the opportunity to enter the institution, although they may be the most talented dancers. 60% of transfers from within region are accepted; 40% of freshman from within region are accepted. The institution is currently bound by California law to this process.

Consequently, a substantial number of students currently entering the dance program are in-region transfer students who have studied dance at a community college or similar institution. Although the audition process has helped to increase overall quality, the program nonetheless finds it cannot accept some of the most talented students who apply because they are freshmen living “out-of-region.”

The concept of reconsidering institutional practice for dance was discussed with faculty and administration. It is a priority for the program to accept the most talented students first – whether they are freshman or transfer, “in-region” or “out-of-region.” The Theatre program has an option to accept a few extraordinary students who demonstrate outstanding potential for success for whom an exception to the impaction rule is made. These students are called “silver bullets.” It is unclear if dance can adopt a parallel practice. The Provost stated that this option would be investigated.

Students undergo a placement adjudication at the conclusion of each academic year to assess progress and determine technical placement for the subsequent academic year. All full-time faculty participate in this process. Class observations affirm that students are appropriately placed for technical level. Rigor and fairness of retention policies appear to be effective and appropriate.

2. Record Keeping

Student files are maintained and located as described in the Self-Study I.H.3.

Documentation of acceptance letters, audition results, letters of acceptance, assessments, including end-of-year adjudication and placement results, were not present within the student files. It is recommended that correspondence, audition results and assessments be printed hard copy and kept in student files for access by all faculty. Consideration may be given to developing a formal exit interview with final evaluation to complete the assessment record from freshman to senior year.

The institution does not appear to meet NASD Standards for Record-keeping (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.H.1.h.).

Video documentation of concerts in a form usable for student and faculty reels is currently an informal and/or qualitatively inconsistent process. Developing a consistent process for quality documentation of concerts, and making this available as needed to students and faculty without violation of copyright law, is a discussion currently taking place for both Theater and Dance. Effective documentation of creative work and performance is becoming more and more essential to a successful career in dance.

3. Advisement

Historically, the Dance Coordinator did advisement each semester through emails and individual meetings with students. This time consuming and critical component of student guidance is in the process of shifting to be a collective responsibility involving all full-time faculty. As faculty

transitions evolve and junior faculty become experienced and established, this collective approach will enhance the already hearty cohesion within the unit. In this department, advising is also mentoring, and the faculty are fully committed to their mentor roles.

I. Published Materials and Web Sites

The current catalog presents departmental information that is inconsistent with current departmental information. This appears to have occurred due to communication breakdowns. Information provided by the department is current, clear and comprehensive. There is no faculty or staff in the Department of Theatre and Dance specifically assigned to developing or maintaining public relations on behalf of dance, so catalog information, listings in publications, promotional materials and website or social media come under the purview of the faculty (and specifically, the Dance Coordinator) by default. The current brochure was developed and produced by the new Dance Coordinator. General dance information appears to be eclipsed by the Theater program, and funding to support PR is limited. A comprehensive approach to addressing public relations, with a dedicated marketing staff member, could provide professionalism and coverage worthy of this strong program.

The current institutional website has a corporate appearance, and does not serve to represent the Theater and Dance program for the opportunities, strengths and gifts it possesses. Discussion with faculty, administration and staff revealed an interest in creating a position for an Arts College Webmaster.

The institution appears to meet the NASD Standard for published materials and Web Sites with the exception of informational consistency presented in the Catalog.

J. Branch Campuses, External Programs, Use of the Institution's Name for Educational Activities Operated Apart from the Main Campus or the Primary Educational Program (not applicable)

K. Community Involvement; Articulation With Other Schools

The Department of Theatre and Dance is active in the community and its production season and initiatives are a significant community resource. Each summer the department hosts a two week West Coast Limon Summer Dance Workshop which serves to bring together dancers from the campus and surrounding area communities to experience studying with masters from this historic and internationally acclaimed dance company. The dance unit has also started a touring group which performs repertory on and off campus in a lecture demonstration format. Other community activities are described in the Self Study page 46.

CSU Fullerton has articulation agreements with several community colleges and serving transfer students is an institutional priority. The dance unit has a designated articulation agent who handles dance transfer students, and it appears the dance unit regularly admits transfer students from community colleges that have dance programs or dance curriculum. Specific articulation agreements regarding dance requirements can be found on a web site that lists all articulation agreements for state schools: <http://www.assist.org>

The institution appears to meet standards relating to Community Involvement and Articulation with Other Institutions.

L. Non-Degree-Granting Programs for the Community (not applicable)

M. Review of Specific Operational Standards for (1) All Institutions of Higher Education for which NASD is the Designated Institutional Accreditor and/or (2) Proprietary Institutions (not applicable)

N. Programs, Degrees, and Curricula

1. Credit Hours

a. Definitions and Procedures

(1) Definition of Credit and Methods of Assigning Credit

The definition of the credit hour for CSF is articulated in two memos which are included at the end of Appendix D in the Self-Study. One memo is to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) visiting team from the Acting Associate Vice President of Undergraduate Programs, and the other is from the CSU Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer to University Presidents in the System. These memos provide detailed information about awarding of credit.

The definition of the credit hour is also published in the Catalog under Enrollment Regulations on page 66:

http://www.fullerton.edu/catalog/pdf/University_Requirements_And_Regulations.pdf

From the above link:

Each semester unit represents three hours of university work per week for one semester. Courses are of three types:

Lecture – one hour in class plus two hours of study.

Activity – two hours of class plus one hour of study.

Laboratory – three hours of laboratory activity in class plus one hour of study outside class.

Some courses may combine two or more of these types. All required courses carry unit credit.

(2) Procedures Used to Make Credit Hour Assignments

The determination of the awarding of credit for new courses occurs through a multi-level approval process. New courses must be approved by appropriate college curriculum committees and the University Curriculum Committee. (Self Study Appendix D and the link) <http://www.fullerton.edu/senate/documents/PDF/400/UPS411-102.pdf>

(3) Means Employed to Ensure Accurate and Reliable Application

Credits for all courses are listed and program length is articulated in the university Catalog, and the CSF Office of Admissions and Records appears to be responsible for recording academic credits for each student. The institution is reviewed periodically by the WASC. Transfer of credit policies can be found at this link.

http://www.fullerton.edu/catalogprevious/catalog2009/2011/admissions_and_registration/trancred.asp

It appears that CSU system is in keeping with NASD Standards in the relation to credit hours.

c. New, Experimental, Atypical Formats or Methods

N/A

2. Specific Curricula

a. General Content and Competency Standards

All students pursuing a B.A. in Dance must fulfill and complete 51 units of general education studies as per the liberal arts requirements for all CSUF B.A. students. These requirements are described in the Self Study in II. B.B. 3.

b. Individual Curriculum-Degree

Bachelor of Arts – 4 years: Dance

- 1) Status: The institution seeks renewal of Final Approval for Listing for the Bachelor of Arts (4-years) in Dance.
- 2) Curriculum: Mission and goals of the dance curriculum are presented of the Self-Study with discussion of credits and percentages in relationship to NASD standards on pages 48 - 51. 120 units are required for graduation. The degree requires a total of 47 credits in dance studies and 15 credits in performance and other required dance electives. This is 52% of the 120 credits required for the degree, thus exceeding the NASD guidelines for the BA.

The curriculum includes developmentally structured course sequences in Modern and Ballet Technique, Composition, Dance History/Theory, Production, Repertory/Performance and Pedagogy with additional required courses in Kinesiology and Rhythmic Analysis. Students have multiple opportunities to perform in both formal and informal concerts. Elective requirements offer flexibility and capitalize on the program's location in the Department of Theatre and Dance. For example, students can study Lighting Design, Make Up, Audio Techniques, Intro to Music, and Acting as well as Tap, Jazz and Pointe. The degree offers enough flexibility for a student to double major, or minor in another subject.

The program has been greeted with enthusiasm by both faculty and students (Self Study page 1, Visitor's observations). In keeping with the intensive training necessary for careers in dance, the current curricular balance of the CSF Dance B.A. program maximizes technical and performance development for the student while also providing a strong general education experience. The quality of student work observed was, in many cases, comparable with that of students in a BFA program. The Self Study (page 1) explains that the department has found it is most beneficial to offer a "robust BA" (rather than a BFA) because of the university requirement of a 51 Unit General Education Package.

- 3) Title/Content Consistency: The title Bachelor of Arts in Dance appears consistent and appropriate in relationship to content.
- 4) Student Work: All major classes/levels observed had a focused, concentrated presentation. Instructors modeled and established a calm, mindful, released yet focused affect. Students were respectful and attentive. Students were appropriately placed. The diverse student body

was reinforced with diversity in body types and gender. Individual corrections were mixed with general comments. In reviewing syllabi and conversing with instructors (full and part-time) it appears that most technique courses incorporate a creative element/opportunity. Even though the record indicates a drop in enrollment within the past two years, most courses observed were full (or over) capacity.

Student work observed in technique and composition classes as well as in the studio performance was of a high quality in relation to national standards for a BA program. Students demonstrated appropriate understanding of technical principles, expressivity in performance and commitment to the art form. In addition, student choreographers exhibited an understanding of choreographic processes with attention to cultural/social ideas and contexts.

A meeting during the visit with Dance Majors (and no faculty) revealed that students appreciate their mentor relationships with a caring faculty and articulated the following regarding the dance program:

- a) Skills learned that are applicable to a range of future careers: Dedication, reliability, hard-workers, accountability, work ethic, leadership, ensemble-team work, communication, building portfolio, creative problem solving, responsibility with sense of awareness of self and others, discipline
- b) Experience a diversity of styles – which prepares them for the demands of the dance market
- c) Students participate in 1-3 (mostly 2+) classes daily; 4-10 (mostly 10) classes per week
- d) The dance program emphasizes good technique, performance /composition /academic courses
- e) Every year both students & faculty are improving. Attrition has slowed.
- f) A recent new faculty hire a big asset- sense of community has improved.
- g) The entire faculty press them to participate in summer programs, attend performances and generally expand their aesthetic palette.
- h) The Dance Association (a student organization) offers scholarships, providing opportunities to attend conferences such as ACDA

Although students expressed some frustrations regarding performance opportunities (they want more), financial constraints, and feel somewhat overshadowed by the theater program, they expressed gratitude and appreciation for the faculty the quality of the program.

- 5) Competencies: Student competencies in technique appear to be effectively developed through the required curriculum and deeply enhanced with the newly created placement review processes. The development of technical proficiency standards for each level would further enhance this process. The Self Study (pages 48-54) discusses the procedures and processes for development of general education competencies, including discussion of assessment. Major papers written for Dance History and Forms & Forces courses were reviewed. Content was good, but papers were not thoroughly graded. Structural integrity, use of vocabulary, and appropriate grammar were fair. Proper citations were inconsistent. The writing presented was generally acceptable for undergraduate work.
- 6) Overall Effectiveness: The program appears to be effective in achieving its stated goals and objectives through the curriculum.

3. Study of the Transcripts of Recent Graduates and Comparison with Catalog Statements

Upon review of three transcripts provided during the visit, the visiting evaluators found no discrepancies in the published requirements and the fulfillment of those requirements by students in the BA in Dance.

4. Total Performance Program

Although the dance unit offers a B.A. degree, the program is heavily performance oriented. All full-time faculty teach in studio areas and choreograph. The extent of performance opportunities and quality of repertory rivals many B.F.A. programs. Performance opportunities for students are described in II. B. (Dance Studies) 3.a of the Self-Study. Dance majors must perform in at least one major production prior to graduation. The students are appreciative of the two weekend performances and experimental “12’x16”” downtown space.

An impressive repertory presentation was observed wherein four works were presented for a non-major “Introduction to Dance” class. Two of the works to be presented at the ACDFGA (Montana) were performed: an original work by a student and work by a guest artist. The CSUF dance program has had works selected for the ACDFGA Gala every year since 2003, and have been selected for the National Gala 3 times since 2003, indicating artistic quality.

The strong performance component and outstanding quality of student creative and technical performance lends credibility to the expressed desire from the students for more performance opportunities. Although currently limited due to production personnel and theatre constraints, both students and faculty are considering experimental options to provide more performance experiences. More opportunities for the students to practice their performance skills would enhance an already strong performance curriculum.

5. Dance for to Non-Major Students

12 units in the Arts & Humanities and 3 units in Cultural Diversity as part of the general education requirement for Liberal Arts degree at CSUF. The dance program offers popular and attractive courses to fulfill the general education arts requirements for non-majors. Each semester, 1500+ non-major students enroll in these General Education offerings instructed by part-time faculty of the Dance unit. By hiring part-time faculty to instruct GE courses, full-time faculty are able to dedicate themselves to the major program. Most of the part-time instructors are alums of the CSUF dance program.

The visitors observed two courses that fulfill these requirements:

Dance 101 – Introduction to Dance. 70 students were enrolled in the section observed. This course provided a taste of many different dance forms; addressed terminology, and as a final project students choreograph and present in small group. These General Education students also attend concerts [“and bring 10 friends”] providing additional audience numbers.

DAN 301 Dance and Culture is on par with other General Education introductory courses in its research demands and fulfills both the Arts requirement as well as the Cultural Diversity requirement. This course is a hybrid on-line/classroom course. On-line readings, assignments and discussion as well as in-class viewing of video combined with discussion are required.

Non-major courses appear to satisfy both institutional General Education goals and NASD Standards.

O. Dance Unit Evaluation, Planning, and Projections

1. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections Development

The institution as a whole and the dance unit as part of Theater and Dance demonstrate a commitment to evaluation, planning and projection. Self-Study III. A, B, C and II. B provides an overview of current process.

The dance unit meets with the Theater Dept. and Chair only one time per semester, which limits discussion for long-term planning. All parties perceive the dance unit's presence as part of the Theater Department as a strength. However, a future concern this arrangement could prove to be detrimental to productivity and progress for dance. This vulnerability is especially disconcerting in light of recent budgetary concerns. The current administration bears only the most supportive and positive of attitudes towards the dance unit, but a lack of budgetary transparency could become a negative should there be a change in administration. Budgetary transparency and direct, clear budgetary allocation procedures, presentation and discussion are encouraged between the Chair and the Dance Coordinator. Institutional budgetary concerns have limited the ability to develop long-term plans.

The development and use of student achievement indicators has greatly improved over the past few years. The audition for entering students, followed by annual juries, auditions for the performance opportunities, and an effective curriculum with a strong emphasis on creativity with improvisation and (3) required composition courses, provide opportunities for on-going assessment, mentoring and final evaluation. One piece that seems to be missing is the final evaluative interview, which would complete the academic assessment loop. Documentation would facilitate data analysis. Conversations with alums are anecdotal to date – a survey could provide useful information for programmatic review.

CSUF has recently undergone a tectonic shift in upper administration (see Self-Study III. D). A new President was inaugurated last year, a new Provost stepped in last December (2013), and the current Arts Dean, Associate Dean and Dean of Students intend to leave at the conclusion of spring 2014. The Chair position has changed twice in the last three years. Beginning this fall, a new Dance Coordinator takes the reins for the dance unit. This new administration is both a challenge and an opportunity, and has clearly been a modifying factor for the unit's approach to futures planning. Futures planning must address the primary issues of faculty retirements, space constraints and maintenance needs, production constraints, and acquiring an additional qualified musician for dance appear to be priority.

2. Completeness and Effectiveness of Self-Study

The self-study is clear, concise, and readable. It effectively and accurately represented the CSUF Dance unit. What is not fully conveyed is the outstanding quality of this program. There appear to be several points where it is not clear how NASD standards are met, but overall, this program has much to be congratulated upon.

P. Standards Summary

- 1) During the visit, the visiting team observed that only about half of the dance major required technique classes in ballet and modern were conducted with live accompaniment. Therefore, it is not clear how the institution meets NASD standards regarding music staff. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.E.9.a.)

- 2) Correspondence with individual prospective students regarding audition results and admission to the program were not included in dance unit files when reviewed by the visiting team. It is not clear how the institution meets NASD standards regarding correspondence with prospective students and parents/guardians and record keeping. In addition, results of assessment processes were not included in student files. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.H.1.a and h.)
- 3) Due to a current informational consistency between departmental materials and catalogue, it is not clear how the institution meets the NASD standard that published materials be accurate (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.I.1.a.).
- 4) The construction of a state-of-the-art new Performing Arts Complex has resolved many of the Theater and Dance Department's previous issues with space and performance venues, however, none of the dance studios appear to meet the NASD standard of 2400 square feet (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.F.1.g.).
- 5) The Self-study does not include specific documentation addressing NASD Standards regarding health and safety and injury prevention in the main body of the report. More information regarding this item is requested for inclusion in the Optional Response. (NASD *Handbook 2013-14*, II.F.1.c.).

Q. Overview, Summary Assessment, and Recommendations for the Program

1. Strengths

- The artistically active dance faculty dedicate themselves to the program and students with excellent teaching, caring advising and mentorship. They set an example of mutual respect and professionalism while providing a cohesive curricular experience with their diverse areas of expertise and extensive collective backgrounds in the field.
- The culture of the program fosters a high level of student engagement. Students articulate awareness of the value of their training and education in dance as it applies to a large range of professional possibilities and options.
- The developmentally sequential curricular tracks in performance/technique, composition, and history/theory integrated with general education requirements provide students with the opportunity to develop as informed, technically skilled and creatively engaged artists in the field of dance.
- The recently renovated Performing Arts Center includes beautiful studios for dance with sprung floors, sound equipment, natural light, adequate ventilation, high ceilings, sound equipment, and pianos. Overall, the Performing Arts Center with its complex of performance spaces, studios and costume/scene shops is a strong asset to the department and institution.
- Collaboration between the units of theatre, musical theatre and dance are remarkably harmonious and mutually beneficial. A hard working and dedicated team of production faculty and staff provide a high level of technical support for the two annual dance concerts.

2. Recommendations for Short-term Improvement

- Although the culture of the Department of Theatre and Dance is harmonious and mutually respectful, it became clear during the visit that the production and design faculty and staff are working to full capacity and beyond. It appears the Dance Faculty have developed a pattern of not asking for needed assistance because of concern for the stress level of the staff. The

visiting team encourages the dance faculty and future coordinator to ask for needed assistance. If support is not available, it is recommended that the Chair of Theatre and Dance and the Dance Coordinator work together to strategically plan a solution that will enable the dance unit to have appropriate technical support for informal showings, outside performances of the performance and repertory classes and other events. Discussions regarding this concern and potential solutions such as graduate assistant dedicated to dance productions occurred during the visit.

- It is recommended that the department work to develop policies regarding budget allocation for dance that assure the sustainability of the dance unit with continued transparency and fairness as the program moves into the future.
- The visiting team commends the dance unit for implementing an audition and assessment process in the technique curriculum. The visiting team recommends the development of a system in which feedback given to students is documented in writing and included in student files (electronic or hard copy). In addition, the unit might consider developing proficiency standards for each level of technique in ballet and modern to further clarify the process to students.
- The visiting team encourages finding a way to introduce first year dance majors to areas such as injury prevention, nutrition, campus counseling and physical therapy resources, plus orientation to computer labs with basic training in sound and video editing. During the visit, discussions occurred about the possibility of including breakout sessions for dance majors during the freshman orientation section of THTR 478B for this purpose.
- Dance education and training is most effective if there is continuity early in the college career. The transfer students frequently are not working at the level of the junior dance student at CSF and often require retraining and changing of unproductive habits. In order to support the increasing high quality of the dance unit and the success of its students, the visiting team recommends the institution consider the possibility of enabling the dance unit to enroll a higher percentage of first year freshmen than is required by the state impaction initiative which gives priority to transfer students from community colleges.
- The documentation of the dance performance (video) are not as professional as desired for use in professional development for reels or student and faculty portfolios. Possible solutions for this concern were discussed with the Chair of Theatre and Dance and the Coordinator of during the visit. The visiting team encourages this continued discussion and exploration of solutions in keeping with the Departmental Mission of preparing the students for success.

3. Primary Futures Issues

Currently the number and ensemble of full-time faculty aptly cover the core, required curriculum of the dance degree, however, next year one of the full-time faculty members will enter a five year period of early retirement of teaching a half load. The following year, another full-time faculty member (who is now teaching a ½ load) will retire. During the visit, discussions with the Provost, Dean of the College of the Arts and Chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance revealed a plan to allocate a full-time position dedicated to the dance unit with a search to occur during the 2014-2015 academic year. The visiting team strongly supports this plan as it is essential to the program being able to offer its core required curriculum. The team also encourages the dance faculty to continue strategic discussions about the job description for this position so it best serves the future development of the program.

4. Suggestions for Long-term Development

The visiting team commends the Department of Theatre and Dance in its commitment to providing two weekends of performances for each of the two annual dance concerts. As the program continues to develop, with its emphasis on performance plus the energy and engagement of students and faculty, the visiting team encourages continued future strategic planning about the potential of additional performance opportunities for dance students. This might include strategies for providing the dance unit additional access to performance venues within the Department of Theatre and Dance or discussion of the possibility of an additional performance venue for the department that would be suitable for dance productions.